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ABSTRACT

Developments occurring at the national, state, and local levels that could affect the future of bilingual education and English as a second Language (ESL) instruction in the next decade are considered. Attention is also directed to (1) the philosophy of the Reagan administration regarding social and educational programs, (2) budgetary changes in the Title VII Act and proposed changes in the language and provisions of the act, (4) issues related to employment of ESL and bilingual educators, and (5) dictates for increased cooperation between organizations like Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages and the National Association for Bilingual Education. The "new federalism" concept, which attempts to shift more responsibility to the local level, and proposed changes in the language of the Title VII Act are cause for concern. There are proposed provisions to reduce the number of children eligible to receive Title VII services down to one million by serving those with the lowest level of English proficiency, and priority would be given to non-English proficiency (NEP) over limited-English proficiency (LEP) children. Another proposed change in the language of the act would allow other approaches besides bilingual education to be employed to meet the needs of LEP/NEP children. (SW)

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# THE FUTURE OF ESL AND BILINGUAL EDUCATION IN THE NEXT DECADE

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Regardless of our political affiliation, we educators must be concerned about the various postures assumed by the present administration regarding expenditures for educational and social programs, especially those aimed at the poor. Critics point to the administration's reiterated promise to dismantle the Department of Education, dilute the Voting Rights Act, emasculate the Lau Regulations and defund the Legal Services Corporation. While millions of dollars are earmarked for costly and sometimes unnecessary armaments (which we are told some of the conscripts cannot operate properly because of an inadequate education), the Department of Education continues to suffer devastating cuts: from $15 billion in 1982 to $11.4 billion in 1983 to $6.9 billion in 1987. The administration would have us believe that its proposal to replace the present Department of Education with a "Foundation for Educational Assistance" (FEA--which in Spanish means "ugly") does not signal a lack of support for education at the federal level. Educators disagree; they feel that "the foundation is not just a tidying up of the bureaucracy to make it more efficient--it's a full scale attempt by the administration to abolish the federal role in education." They see the foundation as a first step toward the total elimination of federal dollars to support the national role in education.

Moreover, educators worry about the priorities of the new administration. As a recent Time magazine article put it: "The problem is that in setting his priorities, the President tends to behave in a way that makes him seem insensitive to minorities on civil rights questions, to the poor where social welfare is concerned, and to women on feminist issues." All this leaves us little cause for rejoicing.

In addition, right now in Washington, D.C. there are several legislative and administrative initiatives afoot designed to seriously curtail the funding for Title VII, as I am sure is happening to Title I and other programs that directly affect not only bilingual education but English as a second language programs. The present level of $157 million for Title VII is slated to be reduced to $134 million for '82, and the administration is asking for only $94 million for 1983, or slightly over half the present funds. The cost of one helicopter not sent to El Salvador would educate a lot of our children in the United States.

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The "new federalism" concept, which attempts to shift more responsibility to the local level, might be seen to benefit ESL programs, which have no national source of special funds comparable to those emanating from Title VII. But many state officials and educators worry that the money that would trickle down to the states either won't be enough to meet all the needs or will be utilized at the discretion of local authorities for purposes other than education.

Proposed changes in the language of the Title VII Act are also cause for concern for both our professions. Attempts to totally defund Title VII are not likely to succeed because even the most radical opponents of special programs for linguistic minority children recognize that the educational needs of these children must be met by one mechanism or another. But other suggested alterations to Title VII can be just as damaging. There are proposed provisions to reduce the number of children eligible to receive Title VII services down to one million by aiming these services

From John R. Boyd & John F. Haskell, eds., "Selected Papers from the Tenth Illinois TESOL/BE Annual Convention" (Chicago, IL, Feb 26-27, 1982)



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at the "most needy." "Most needy" would be equated with the lowest level of English proficiency--that is, priority would be given to NEP (non-English proficient) children over LEP (limited-English proficient) children, under the assumption that NEP children have greater educational needs than LEP children. It is a cardinal mistake of the reformers to assume that the main goal of schools is just to teach English, rather than to educate, or that education can be imparted only in English. Research evidence and experience indicate that academic skills obtained through any native language can be transferred to any other language through adequate educational programs. In other words, limited English proficiency by itself cannot be the sole criteria for predicting success or failure in the acquisition of academic skills in the classroom.

The second proposed change in the language of the Act would allow other approaches besides bilingual education to be employed to meet the needs of LEP/NEP children. Presently a district which seeks Title VII funds must offer an instructional program which is bilingual--i.e., which includes a native language component in addition to ESL instruction. Under the new provisions, a district could submit a proposal to carry out autonomous ESL programs or other approved types of English-only approaches (such as immersion).

I am sure that these proposals will generate a variety of responses in different quarters. It is unrealistic to expect everybody to support either the present language of Title VII or the revised versions being proposed. But whatever position we bilingual educators favor, we must not allow ourselves to say that we oppose English-only options under Title VII because bilingual programs constitute the only way to serve LEP or NEP children. The evidence simply is not on our side. (I recommend to you Jim Cummins' latest article, "The Effectiveness of Bilingual Education," which addresses this point in detail.) We believe that bilingual education has numerous advantages beyond contributing to the acquisition of English by LEP children, but if we are to be professionally honest, we cannot claim that it is the only method of the best method in all circumstances. We have to admit (and we do admit) that under certain circumstances non-bilingual approaches may be more feasible and cost-effective than bilingual programs. Thus we can support or oppose the changes in the language of Title VII, but let us be sure to give the right reasons--reasons that can be empirically supported by research, reasons that take into consideration the best interests of the children we serve and not merely those of our own professions.

With respect to immersion programs as viable alternatives for the U.S., much needs to be clarified. We don't know whether Canadian-style immersion programs or the "structured immersion" variants favored by some will be suitable for U.S. populations who do not constitute the majority, who are not learning a prestige foreign language in a supportive setting, who do not come from high socioeconomic backgrounds. Researchers tell us to proceed with caution in this respect and we should heed their advice.

One final comment in this area. Some people may question the use of Title VII funds, which are so scarce, for other than bilingual education approaches--not because these other approaches are not valid but because other sources of funding such as Title I are available for those purposes. This is another, legitimate argument, which has nothing to do with the validity of the approach itself, but only with the utilization of fiscal resources for particular purposes. Once again, let us keep our positions clear.

Turning to the state and local levels, we need to be concerned with what I call issues of the profession. For too long ESL and bilingual teachers have been treated as outsiders in the educational establishment, whether at the school or college level. We are coming to be known as "LIFO'S"--"last in, first out." We hear all sorts of horror stories pertaining to employment matters: no job security, no tenure or permanence, no promotional benefits, no certification, assignment to substitute duties--in short, a less than exalted status for capable professionals. At times bilingual and ESL educators are pitted against each other unnecessarily because state and/or federal regulations allow schools to pay the salary of bilingual teachers but not of ESL teachers, or vice versa. Some states have ESL certification/endorsement but not bilingual, or vice versa. The groups fortunate enough to gain certification or employment become the target of the excluded ones, and I believe that this result is both unfortunate and avoidable. How can we justify benefits for ourselves--such as certification--and yet deny them to our fellow teachers? If certification is so good, then it should be available to all our colleagues who meet the established criteria.

In this respect it's ironic that some teachers pay dues to teacher unions who then utilize that money to lobby against their own best interests. It is imperative that we keep our unions and our organizations honest and consonant with our principles. Also, when dealing with matters pertaining to employment, we should analyze the issues from the point of view of the whole profession of language teachers, and not from that of small special interest groups. In every state ESL and bilingual teachers should band together, and whoever has achieved certification or other benefits should support the efforts (financially and legislatively) of other groups trying to obtain the same benefits. The cooperative efforts of COTESOL AND CABBE in Colorado last year are illustrative of what can be done in this respect.

Another issue of moment is the increased politization of educational policy making. I think I am not naive enough to believe that education can ever be free from politics, but this year the players have gotten the art of mixing politics with education down to a science (if you'll forgive the mixed metaphor). A perfect example is the Baker-de Kanter report that came out of the Office of Planning and Evaluation of the Department of Education. This document began as a perfectly legitimate effort to gather supporting evidence for the then Secretary of Education Shirley Hufstedler to use in promulgating the ill-fated 1980 proposed Lau Regulations. It was to be a review of existing Title VII program evaluations--not empirical or action research. Midway through the project (started under the Carter Administration) Secretary Bell and the new Administration withdrew the proposed regulations, and the document should have become moot. But by then the project had acquired a life of its own, fueled by the personal desire of various Department of Education officials to discredit the bilingual program. Even the writers of the document must have been surprised at the way their work was prefaced by a five-page summary with policy implications that were difficult to support on the basis of the main document.

The report, which by then had become an "internal" paper--having been neither commissioned nor approved by the current Secretary--was leaked to the press, and the "trial by newspaper" of bilingual education began. The upshot of all this is that the contents of the report (which incidentally takes potshots at ESL programs) have been quoted as gospel truth

despite the methodological shortcomings pointed out by responsible researchers of many persuasions and the obvious self-serving political bias of the Department of Education officials who instigated it.

It is important for all of us to realize that more and more the government is resorting to such tactics as circulating damaging reports of dubious authenticity and quality, and passing them off as legitimate "research." In the ensuing hue and cry about the affected programs, public opinion is molded and some accommodating legislator can always be found to introduce a bill radically altering the program in question (cf. Rep. Stauton's and Sen. Huddleston's bills of recent vintage). We have to be on the alert for this type of unethical utilization of research results to formulate educational policy.

I have discussed at some length developments occurring at the national, state and local levels which could affect the future of bilingual education and ESL in the next decade. I have discussed the philosophy of the new administration regarding social and educational programs, budgetary changes (particularly as they apply to Title VII), proposed changes in the Title VII Act, and issues related to employment of the professions. What is the outlook for the future? And what should be our plan of action?

I feel optimistic about the future of ESL and bilingual education, but we have a lot of work to do. First, there must be increased cooperation between collateral organizations like TESOL and NABE at the national and affiliate levels. As I said before, both our organizations have a good record of cooperative ventures. For example, Colorado TESOL helped Colorado NABE fight against the repeal of the state bilingual law, and even though the effort was unsuccessful it resulted in closer ties between the two affiliates. Florida TESOL, in turn, carried out joint fundraising activities with Florida NABE and worked together to develop a national language policy statement. Also, many of you are aware that some local affiliates, notably NJTESOL/NJBE and Alaska TESOL/BE, are associated with both NABE and TESOL.

In addition NABE participates with TESOL in the Joint National Committee for Languages (JNCL) in the belief that the language teaching profession is and should be one family. Jim Alatis has testified on various occasions on behalf of bilingual education, and recently we both found ourselves as witnesses before the National Advisory Council for Bilingual Education in Washington, DC. In turn, NABE has supported Representative Simon's HR 3231 bill promoting foreign languages. Both organizations strive to have representation from sister groups at their national conventions to maintain contact with each other.

More importantly, TESOL has issued a position paper on "The Role of ESL in Bilingual Education" (I was fortunate to participate in the drafting of the document) which unequivocably supports good bilingual programs with good ESL components. The document makes some telling assertions that we should keep in mind when we are threatened with dissension among the ranks:

> "Bilingual teachers and teachers of ESOL must accept a partnership relationship in bilingual education."
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> "Of the three educational approaches listed above (bilingual instruction

with ESL, monolingual instruction with ESL, monolingual instruction with no ESL), TESOL recommends the first, bilingual instruction including an ESL component, as the preferred model, for instructing students of limited English proficiency, whenever feasible."

Under strategies for cooperation the position paper pledges that "TESOL will maintain and enhance the reciprocal liaison which has been established with NABE." Finally the document reaffirms that "International TESOL endorses and supports the bilingual approach to education, recognizing that it provides students of limited English proficiency with equal educational opportunities. ESL is an integral and essential component of bilingual-bicultural programs in the United States."

For its part, NABE has been very active fighting for the survival of Title VII and joining with local groups in promoting certification of ESL and bilingual teachers in various states. NABE is also cooperating with AACTE to develop standards for accrediting multicultural teacher education programs. Also, our sociopolitical concerns committee is in the process of drafting a new Title VII bill for consideration by Congress, and we continue to work very closely with Jim Alatis in Georgetown. Personally, this is my third visit this year to a TESOL affiliate, and I and other NABE Executive Board members will continue to share with you all for a long time to come. More importantly, NABE feels strongly that we should have an ESL SIG in the same way that TESOL has a Bilingual Education SIG. I am thus issuing a challenge to any of you who are NABE members to assist me in setting up such a SIG in NABE before the year is out.

The existing cooperation between TESOL and NABE is a good first step, but more must be done. There is a need for all of us to become more politically active. It is irresponsible to attempt to avoid political activism by hiding under the label of "educators" and leaving the politicking to lobbyists. All of us are lobbyists--we better be, if we care what happens to education. This doesn't mean that all of us have to run for office, or that we have to run around the halls of Congress or of state capitols. There are many ways to become involved, and I recommend to the leaders of Illinois TESOL/BE that they obtain a copy of the JNCL manual on political involvement, which lists in cookbook fashion all that can be done to influence the actions of federal, state and local governments in educational matters.

We must also learn to respond to calls for action and not fall back on the "I'm too busy" reply or "I'll do it next time." We should look upon participation in the day-to-day political process as we do upon participation in the affairs of our children's schools. The consequences of the New Federalism may not all be positive, but it may force us to become participants at the local level. We can make a difference, but only if we choose to get involved.

Above all, it is essential that we assist the United States in developing a national and rational language policy which, rather than restrict and mandate, liberates the nation and its citizens to be all that they can be. Whatever our philosophy of education or of life might be, knowing more can't be worth less. Any policy in any country which endorses monolingualism as a desired outcome of the educational process can't be very enlightened. Whatever our approach or methodology for getting there, all of us as educators and people of good will should be able to support the

notion that bilingualism is in the national interest (really in the international interest). Let us agree in principle that bilingualism (multilingualism) and biculturalism (multiculturalism) are good things. Then let us agree to explore all possibilities for a bilingual America and a bilingual, peace-loving world.

Que Dios les bendiga!